

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAM-01 OPIC-03 BIB-01 IO-10 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 AID-05 NIC-01 SAJ-01

/079 W

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R 121517Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8195

INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 02199

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJECT: FORMER PORTUGUESE POLITICIAN ASKS FOR US
ASSISTANCE

1. JOSE HARRY DE ALMEIDA, PORTUGUESE NATIONAL, CONTACTED
EMBASSY FEBRUARY 11 AND ASKED FOR US ASSISTANCE IN SET-
TING UP CRASH INFORMATION PROGRAM FOR THE BENEFIT OF
PORTUGUESE WHO ARE BEING SUBJECTED TO ONE-SIDED COMMUNIST
CONTROL OF MEDIA IN PORTUGAL. ALMEIDA TOLD EMBOFF HE
WAS NOT INTERESTED IN MONEY BUT RATHER IN TECHNICAL
SKILLS, WHICH HE DOES NOT HAVE, AND IN THE EQUIPMENT
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NECESSARY FOR BEAMING RADIO PROGRAM INTO PORTUGAL.

2. BY WAY OF BACKGROUND, ALMEIDA SAID HE WAS SECRETARY GENERAL OF PORTUGUESE LIBERAL PARTY WHICH HAS BEEN BANNED IN PORTUGAL. HE CLAIMED HE WAS CHIEF ORGANIZER FOR ABORTIVE "SILENT MAJORITY" DEMONSTRATION LAST FALL WHICH LED TO SPINOLA'S RESIGNATION. PRESENT REGIME, HE SAID, HAD ISSUED WARRANT FOR HIS ARREST. HE SAID HE HAD BEEN ABLE TO FLEE FROM PORTUGAL IN EARLY OCTOBER TO SPAIN, WHERE HE HAD RENTED A VILLA IN MARBELLA AREA. HE CONDUCTS NO POLITICAL ACTIVITIES IN SPAIN, BUT HE HAS SPOKEN ON BBC, RADIO LUXEMBOURG, A FRENCH STATION ON PROGRAMS IN PORTUGUESE AIMED AT THE PORTUGUESE AUDIENCE. HE RECENTLY SPOKE AT A LIBERAL INTERNATIONAL (LI) MEETING IN ROME WHERE HE DID NOT SUCCEED IN GETTING LI TO RECOGNIZE THE PORTUGUESE LIBERAL PARTY SINCE IT IS ILLEGAL IN PORTUGAL.

3. ALMEIDA IS EXTREMELY PESSIMISTIC ABOUT PORTUGUESE DEVELOPMENTS. HE APPEARS TO HAVE CONSIDERABLE BACKGROUND ON LAST APRIL'S COUP AS WELL AS ON THE DECISIONS AND ACTIONS OF SPINOLA, WHOM HE ADMIRERD BUT FEELS WAS NAIVE, AND COSTA GOMES, WHOM HE CONSIDERS A PROFESSIONAL BETRAYER. WHILE ONLY A SMALL NUMBER OF THE MILITARY ARE COMMUNIST, HE CONSIDERS THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THE COUNCIL AND A LARGE NUMBER OF THE AFM ASSEMBLY ARE MARXIST IF NOT COMMUNIST; THE NON-COMMUNISTS ARE BOTH SCARED AND SO INEXPERIENCED AS TO BE INEFFECTIVE.

4. ALMEIDA EXPECTS THE ANNOUNCED ELECTION WILL, IN ALL LIKELIHOOD, BE A FOOLISH EXERCISE. IT IS INCONCEIVABLE THAT THE POLLS WILL PRODUCE A RESULT WHICH WILL BE UNACCEPTABLE TO EITHER THE AFM OR THE COMMUNISTS, AND THE AFM IS QUITE CAPABLE OF INTIMIDATION OF THE ELECTORATE OR SIMPLE MANIPULATION OF THE VOTE TO ACHIEVE WHAT IT WANTS. WHILE COMMUNIST REAL STRENGTH IS PERHAPS NO

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R 121517Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8196

INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 LONDON 02199

GREATER THAN 15 PERCENT, ALMEIDA WILL NOT BE SURPRISED IF A DIFFERENT RESULT IS ANNOUNCED LATER. WHAT THE COMMUNISTS AND THE AFM WANT, ACCORDING TO ALMEIDA, IS A MILITARY-LEFTIST DICTATORSHIP MASKED WITH ENOUGH OF A PLURALISTIC LOOK TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE WEST.

5. ALMEIDA SAID HE HAD DISCUSSED THIS PROJECT WITH BRITISH LIBERALS AND WITH THE BBC. THE BRITISH DON'T WANT TO GET INVOLVED, HE SAID, THOUGH IN THE END THEY WILL HAVE TO BECOME VERY MUCH INVOLVED. HE WENT ON IN SOME CONFIDENTIAL

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DETAIL AS TO THE IMPORTANCE OF PORTUGAL AS AN ATLANTIC AND NATO COUNTRY. IN REGARD TO COMMUNIST STRATEGY AND PLANNING ON PORTUGAL, HE REFERRED FREQUENTLY TO AN "ACTION PROGRAM" ADOPTED BY THE THEN-ILLEGAL PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST PARTY IN 1965 WHICH IS "AMAZINGLY" SIMILAR TO THE PRESENT AIMS OF THE AFM.

6. EMBOFF AGREED TO FORWARD ALMEIDA'S INFORMATION AND REQUEST, BUT WARNED HIM THERE WAS LITTLE LIKELIHOOD US COULD SUPPORT HIS EFFORT HOWEVER LAUDABLE HIS PURPOSES. ALMEIDA, WHO SEEMS TO BE IN ORBIT NOW INVOLVING SPAIN,

LONDON, PARIS, ANTWERP (WHERE HE HAS FAMILY), MAINTAINS MAILING ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE IN SPAIN (C/O MARBELLA CLUB, MARBELLA, TELEPHONE 52-82-4420) AND WILL RETURN LONDON IN NEAR FUTURE. HE WOULD ALSO AGREE TO COME TO US SHOULD THAT BE DESIRED.

7. COMMENT: ALMEIDA IS A PASSIONATE ANTI-COMMUNIST, OBVIOUSLY WELL-EDUCATED, INTELLIGENT, AND HIGHLY ARTICULATE. HE SEEMS TO BE CAUGHT UP IN A VISION OF A FUTURE "RADIO FREE PORTUGAL," WITH MOBILE RADIO VANS BEAMING THE "TRUTH" INTO THE HUNGRY EARS OF PORTUGUESE FROM SOMEWHERE ALONG THE SPANISH BORDER. WE GAVE HIM NO REPEAT NO ENCOURAGEMENT THAT USG COULD ASSIST HIM.

8. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING ANY BACKGROUND OR BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON ALMEIDA THAT ADDRESSEES MAY HAVE.

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